

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 CU-02 DHA-02 /062 W
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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
USMISSION USBERLIN
USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BERLIN 6469

E.O.11652: GDS
TAGS: PINT, GE
SUBJECT: GDR WRITERS MAY CRITICIZE SENTENCING OF JENA STUDENTS

SUMMARY: AFTER A PERIOD OF RELATIVE CLAM THERE ARE SIGNS THAT
THERE MAY BE TROUBLE BETWEEN MEMBERS OF THE INTELLECTUAL
COMMUNITY AND GDR REGIME. A NUMBER OF PROMINENT CULTURAL
FIGURES APPEAR TO BE IN THE PROCESS OF EMIGRATING FROM THE
GDR OR ARE GIVING THIS SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. THIS COULD
BE EMBARRASSING TO REGIME. GDR MAY ALSO BE PLANNING TO PRO-
SECUTE EIGHT STUDENTS ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH BIERMANN
AFFAIR. THIS IS CAUSING CONCERN IN GDR INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY
AND SOME MAY OPENLY CRITICIZE REGIME IN WEST BERMAN PRESS.
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END SUMMARY.

1. WE HAVE RECEIVED INDICATIONS FROM EMBASSY
CONTACTS IN THE GDR INTELLECTUAL COMMUNITY THAT SEVERAL
PROMINENT BIERMANN PETITION SIGNERS MAY SOON GO PUBLIC
IN DEFENSE OF EIGHT GDR STUDENTS STILL IN PRISON IN
JENA FOR THEIR ACTIVITIES AT THE TIME OF THE BIERMANN

OUSTER IN NOVEMBER 1976. IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF, TWO GDR STUDENTS, ONE ACTIVELY INVOLVED IN THE JENA GROUP, CONFIRMED THAT THE EIGHT STUDENTS ARE STILL IN PRISON AND WILL SOON BE BROUGHT TO TRIAL. IT APPEARS THAT THE GDR WILL CHARGE THEM WITH PETTY OFFENSES COMMITTED BEFORE THE BIERMANN AFFAIRS AS WELL AS WITH WORKING WITH WESTERN GROUPS - SPECIFICALLY FRG MAOIST ORGANIZATIONS - IN FOMENTING PROTEST AGAINST THE BIERMANN EXPATRIATION. THE WORD IN JENA IS THAT THE STUDENTS COULD RECEIVE 3 TO 10 YEAR PRISON TERMS.

2. AT A RECENT EMBASSY RECEPTION, GDR WRITER JUREK BECKER TOLD EMBOFF THAT HE WAS CONSIDERING GIVING AN INTERVIEW TO FRG WEEKLY MAGAZINE DER SPIEGEL CRITICIZING THE GDR FOR ITS HARSH TREATMENT OF THE JENA STUDENTS. WE HAVE HEARD FROM OTHER GDR SOURCES THAT GDR WRITER SARAH KIRSCH, LIKE BECKER A BIERMANN PETITION SIGNER, PLANS TO WRITE A LETTER TO HONECKER PROTESTING GDR CHARGES AGAINST THE STUDENTS AND MAY RELEASE THE LETTER TO WESTERN JOURNALISTS.

3. COMMENT: THE GDR HAS FACED NO SIGNIFICANT PUBLIC CRITICISM FROM ARTISTS AND WRITERS WHO SUPPORTED BIERMANN SINCE THE NOVEMBER EXPATRIATION. IT HAS ALLOWED THE CONFIDENTIAL

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DISSATISFIED, SUCH AS ACTOR MANFRED KRUG AND WRITERS THOMAS BRASCH AND RAINER KUNZE, TO EMIGRATE TO THE FRG IN RECENT MONTHS, WHILE PUTTING MILD AND NUANCED PRESSURE ON OTHER BIERMANN SUPPORTERS TO STAY IN LINE. THE SED MAY NOW FEEL THAT THE SITUATION HAS CALMED ENOUGH TO ALLOW SENTENCING OF THE JENA PROTESTERS, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF WRITER JUERGEN FUCHS ALL UNKNOWN WITHOUT A REPUTATION IN THE WEST TO PROTECT THEM. ANY RESULTANT STEPS BY BECKER, KIRSCH AND PERHAPS OTHER PROMINENT BIERMANN SUPPORTERS TO TAKE UP THE STUDENT ' CAUSE, PARTICULARLY IN THE FRG PRESS, WOULD REPRESENT THE FIRST PUBLIC CONFRONTATION OF SED AUTHORITY BY WRITERS IN THE GDR SINCE BIERMANN. IT WOULD ALSO THWART GDR EFFORTS TO KEEP THE CULTURAL SCENE QUIET DURING THE BELGRADE CONFERENCE.

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USIA-06 CU-02 DHA-02 /062 W
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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5195
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 BERLIN 6469

4. WE HAVE OBSERVED SCANT OPTIMISM AMONG GDR
INTELLECTUALS OF LATE THAT THE LOT OF WRITERS AND ARTISTS
WILL IMPROVE SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE.
WHILE THE CULTURAL ATMOSPHERE IS OUTWARDLY CALM, AND
WHILE THE SED HAS BEGUN GRANTING MORE EXIT VISAS FOR
GDR WRTERS TO VISIT THE WEST, OFTEN TIMES MERELY FOR
TOURISM, THE SOMEWHAT STRICTER CONTROLS ON WHAT CAN BE
PUBLISHED IN THE GDR APPARENT SINCE BIERMANN REMAIN IN
FORCE. PARTICULARLY SINCE THE DEPARTURE OF THE POPULAR
AND RESPECTED ACTOR MANFRED KRUG IN JUNE, WE HAVE
NOTICED THAT MORE GDR CULTURAL FIGURES APPEAR WILLING
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TO MUSE OPENLY ABOUT WHETHER THEY TOO MIGHT APPLY FOR
EMIGRATION TO THE FRG. WE HAVE HEARD FROM RELIABLE
GDR SOURCES THAT WELL-KNOWN GDR ACTRESS ANGELICA DORMROESE
HAS RECENTLY APPLIED TO LEAVE, AS HAS ACTOR HILMAR
THATE. RUMOR HAS IT THAT POPULAR ACTRESS JUTTA HOFFMANN

MAY ALSO APPLY FOR EMIGRATION.

5. SINCE BIERMANN, THE GDR HAS TO OUR KNOWLEDGE RANTED EVERY REQUEST FOR EMIGRATION BY PROMINENT GDR CULTURAL FIGURES. IT CANNOT HELP BUT BE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, AT THE PROSPECT OF LOSING ITS MOST POPULAR ARTISTS, AND THERE ARE INDICATIONS THAT THE GDR MADE AN EFFORT TO CONVINCE ACTOR KRUG TO STAY, INCLUDING SEVERAL CONVERSATIONS CONTINUE OR INCREASE, THE GDR MAY SOON BE FORCED TO TIGHTEN UP,JUST AS IT DID IN DECEMBER 1976, IN ATTEMPTING TO GET A HANDLE ON RISING EMIGRATION APPLICATIONS FROM EVERYDAY GDR CITIZENS, AND FORCE GDR CULTURAL FIGURES TO STAY IN THE GDR.

6. MEANWHILE, WE HAVE HEARD FROM A GDR STUDENT WITH GOOD CONTACTS IN JENA THAT STUDENT'S THERE ORGANIZED TO SUPPORT THE EIGHT IMPRISONED BIERMANN SUPPORTERS MAY IN FACT BE MAINTAINING CONTACTS WITH WESTERN GROUPS. ACCORDING TO THE STUDENT, A WEST BERLIN BASED ORGANIZATION CALLED THE COMMITTEE TO SUPPORT THE JENA STUDENTS, HEADED BY A MEMBER OF THE WEST BERLIN WRITERS' ASSOCIATION, HAS PROVIDED FINANCIAL SUPPORT TO THOSE IN JENA WHO HAVE SUFFERED REPRISALS ON THE BIERMANN AFFAIR SHORT OF IMPRISONMENT. SOME OVBSERVERS IN JENA REPORTEDLY FEAR THAT BY MAINTAINING SUCH WESTERN CONTACTS, THE JENA GROUP IS MERELY PLAYING INTO THE HANDS OF GDR OFFICIALS WHO ARE BASING THEIR CRIMINAL CHARGES IN PAR TON SUCH WESTERN CONTACTS IN AN ATTEMPT CONFIDENTIAL

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TO DISCREDIT THOSE WHO SUPPORTED BIERMANN. THE STUDENT EXPRESSED CONCERN THAT THERE COULD THUS BE FURTHER ARRESTS IN JENA, PARTICULARLY IF THE SENTENSING OF THE EIGHT ALREADY IN CUSTODY LEADS TO PUBLIC CONTROVERSY AND AN UPROAR IN THE FRG PRESS. POLANSKY

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL STABILITY, INTELLECTUALS, EMIGRANTS, PUBLIC ATTITUDES, COURT DECISIONS, STUDENTS, TRIALS
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Decaption Note:
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Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977BERLIN06469
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770252-0960
Format: TEL
From: BERLIN
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Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770755/aaaabuzr.tel
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Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Retention: 0
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Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 1853653
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: GDR WRITERS MAY CRITICIZE SENTENCING OF JENA STUDENTS SUMMARY: AFTER A PERIOD OF RELATIVE CLAM THERE ARE SIGNS THAT THERE MAY BE TROUBLE BETWEEN MEM BERS OF THE INTELL
TAGS: PINT, GC
To: STATE BELGRADE
Type: TE
vdkgvkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/5162566b-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009